WT 586 428 WT 586 684

then they go to their father, and eventually inherit his property. Except in the case of a "makpa" husband (see makpa) a Ladáki woman cannot divorce her husband against his will, but a man may divorce his wife for adultery. In such cases, circumstantial evidence against a woman is not enough, and a man who would take proceedings against his wife unless she had been taken "in flagrante delicto," would be looked down upon and termed a "meestam sonum batkhan" i.e., one who listens to scandalous rumours.

Divorces of this kind are rare, for Ladákis are peculiarly free from sentimental ideas of dishonour and wickedness in connection with this offence, which they regard as amounting to an infringement of private rights in property rather than as anything more serious. Consequently, if the offending wife is willing to return to her husband, the latter usually consents to hush the matter up, in consideration of a sum of money probably 4 or 5 rupees or other valuables being given to him, as compensation, by his wife's lover. If the woman refuses to return to her husband, the latter can divorce her and retain possession of her property. If a man wishes to divorce his wife for any offence other than adultery, and his younger brothers do not agree to this, then the eldest brother, if he persists in divorcing his wife, must give her enough land to support her and his younger brothers. The wife and the younger brothers then leave the family roof and set up house together of their own account. WT [595]

Ladákis never apply to the Kashmir law courts for a divorce, such matters they arrange among themselves. They are however subject to the Kashmir laws, and a vindictive husband or wife may bring his or her case before the Kashmir courts. These do not pronounce decrees of "divorce" but they may imprison or fine persons found guilty of infidelity. WT 692 684

DOGRA--singpa. Owing no doubt to the fact that most Dogra names end with the syllable "sing." The Dogras are looked up to as soldiers but if a Civil official is described as a Dogra, it is almost tantamount to an insinuation that he is an ignorant, pig-headed fellow. A man who is not a Dogra is not spoken of as a Dogra, but if a Dogra is described as a Dogra, the intention is to indicate that he is not clever. WT 563 704 D 704 WT 186● 554

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

able British Government is paying him some large salary for his services !

Strange is it to see the extraordinary mixture of finery and rags in their religious services, ceremonies and festivals, the rich brocaded Chinese silk gowns of the dancing lamas having little tags of cheapest gaudily-dyed butter muslin attached, while beautiful clothes are surmounted by tinselled hats, the latter the sort of rubbish that children love for " dressing up " in the west. Strange too, is the mixture of clownishness and solemnity, as seen especially at the Hemis festival. In the altars of little private chapels in the homes of the richer Buddhists, the most beautiful metal work will be found side-by-side with a cracked cup or an old tin, while in the matter of dress, dirt and finery often go together, nor do they seem to see the former in demanding a price for a second-hand, one might say an " umpteenth " hand, garment with beautiful Chinese embroidery, but so tattered and frayed and soiled, that a European can only reject it.

So does one thing after the other seem to our ideas the wrong way round in this strange land, where the term *mgologpa* (" head-turned " or " back to front " man) is a common term of reproach. But is it they who are, as it were, the wrong side of the Looking-Glass, or are we ?

Some years ago one of our colleagues in the course of conversation with a Ladaki, referred to their peculiar and distinctive smell, and was filled with surprise and chagrin when he was told that that was quite comprehensible, for we *Pyigling pa* (pronounced Pilingpa, being literally outsiders, *i.e.*, foreigners) had an unpleasant odour in the Ladaki estimation also. Having some idea of the ratio of their ablutions to ours, this was a distinct blow to the Sahibs' vanity !

In attempting to understand this land and people, we must therefore remember that we are the outsiders and ours are extraordinary ideas and standards. After all, is it not wiser to expose your older dress to the daily wear and

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

121 tear, and keep your best one clean, yet availing yourself of
● 186 its warmth, instead of putting it away to get moth-eaten? How much better to have your garden on the roof, where the passer-by may not be tempted to snatch a blossom over an easily knocked-down mud wall, and as for having your best room at the top of the house, it certainly has the better view there, and is further removed from the dust and the smell of the narrow lanes, which are only scavenged by the unclaimed street-dogs and the indefatigable crows and ravens. Indeed, but for these unrecognized friends, aided by the dryness of the climate and the long winter frost, the town would soon be uninhabitable for lack of sanitation. So let us hope that living among these strange people may develop in us a sweet reasonableness as to differences of opinion, which perhaps some of our insulated compatriots may find it more difficult to obtain. As another colleague frequently reminds us, they think we are all mad, some more than others. True, we have invented "motres" (motors), telegraphy, electric lighting and other wonders seen in Srinagar, the nearest point of real civilization, but who, save more or less mad people could produce such strange inventions? Probably the demons have revealed such tricks to us. Was not the Great White Queen Victoria herself a demon, demonstrated by the fact that she rode side-saddle? At any rate if challenged as to the rightness of his methods, the Ladaki can point out that his civilization is older than ours, and this same antiquity is adduced by him as an argument in favour of his religion as compared with ours.

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

846 because she simply could not keep awake otherwise. At the
852 end of a month the burning of incense purifies the mother, and she may again handle the culinary utensils, while the birth-feast is now celebrated, in which all the houses of the village should at least be represented. In Leh, however, with its 8,000 or more inhabitants, this would be almost an impossibility, so this like other ceremonies, has had to be modified. Thus, to see the real customs of the country one must go to the villages. Every guest brings with him to the feast a pot of barley-meal called *Marzan*. All the contributions are now mixed together, and each lady present partakes of
553 the joint dish. This is called the *Dargang*. The *Ming tagches*,
784 which means the " tying-on " of a name, is postponed till a con-
186 venient season, this being the coming of a *Skushog*, who is
789 requested to select a suitable designation. Sometimes caution also calls for a postponement of the christening, for evil spirits are keen on boys, and the name may give away the sex. However, if necessary, one can camouflage this by "tying" a girl's name on to a boy. Until the naming, a boy is called *Brogpa*, or his little sister *Brogma*, for what could be more ugly than these old Dardish descendants ? Evil spirits prefer pretty children, but would have no desire to carry off a *Brogpa* child ! Sometimes *Ming tagches* is quite omitted, and then this opprobrious appellation has to be borne throughout life. Thoroughly to cheat these foolish spirits, it is a good plan to make the children look as hideous as their namesakes by drawing a dirty black mark across the forehead over the bridge to the tip of the nose. Sometimes it is necessary to push the delusion still further. The sad parents have lost three or four children, and how can they save their latest arrival ? They have already called it *Brogpa* and made it as hideous as one of these gentlemen, so now only one thing remains to be done—it must be sent to live with these disgusting people, and failing these, to a Mon blacksmith or musician.

24: Peter E-5 (1950-1957) 1963 AJ1 Tibet AJ1
West Tibetans AJ4

during all my field work, both before and after World War II, with data and recorded facts which now make it possible for me to affirm without any hesitation that polyandry between father and sons is practised in Tibet, particularly in the two central provinces of Ü and Tsang, where it is most widespread. The following is the history of the progress of my investigation, which started with the collection of information from those who knew about the custom and ended with my actually meeting cases and interviewing them to find out how the arrangement functions.

I began in Lahul. It will be recalled that when I visited that valley, on the 21st of June, 1938, Thakur Partap Chand took me to see a polyandrous family in a house called Barun-pa (see above page 312–312). I took advantage of the cordiality which the Wazir of Lahul showed towards me to question him on the subject of the polyandry of fathers and sons about which I had heard from Dr. Kanshi Ram.

The informant immediately confirmed its existence and said that it was common knowledge, even in his part of the world, that, in Central Tibet, fathers and sons share a common wife in the same family, although the woman in this case must never be the mother of the boys. Nevertheless in Lahul the custom appeared rather strange and even repulsive, and it was quite usual for Tibetans from Tibet proper to be laughed at for this form of matrimony by the local inhabitants. They were accused of being "step-mother sharing people" which was meant as an insult. But at the same time, when playing dice, it was the custom to evoke such a shared step-mother as a means of bringing good luck to the thrower. When a seven was wanted, for instance, a special formula evoking the step-mother shared by both fathers and sons was repeated several times.

Another confirmation of the true existence of polyandry between fathers and sons in Tibet was obtained from the Reverend F. A. Peter of the Moravian Mission in Kye-lang on the 24th of June, 1938. He told me that the institution existed when the Mission was established in Lahul in 1854 as ancient records showed. At the time that his father, the late Bishop Peter, was appointed to the Lahuli capital in 1898, there were still some cases of this special form of polyandry to be found in the valley. The Reverend Peter said that he had heard that it had not yet died out in Spiti, although it was difficult to make sure because the local people kept it secret and unavowed. (As far as I know, polyandry in general is not officially practised in Spiti, the surplus males of a family becoming monks while the eldest alone inherits the family property. A certain amount of clandestine polyan-